



National
Wildlife Refuge
Association

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 26, 2016

CONTACT: Christine McGowan, cmcgowan@refugeassociation.org, (802) 505-0508

New Slate of Officers Joins National Wildlife Refuge Association Board of Directors

The National Wildlife Refuge Association is pleased to welcome three new and two returning members to its Board of Directors. The new slate of officers was voted in during the Refuge Association's annual meeting held May 20 in Manteo.

New board members include Dragana Connaughton, of Palm Beach, FL; Alan Palisoul, of Bethesda, MD; and Cheryl Hart, of Portland, OR. Returning board members include William Buchanan, Jr., of New Canaan, CT and Tom Goettel, of South Thomaston, ME.

"Our new directors bring great professional diversity to our board," said David Houghton, President of the Refuge Association. "From real estate and finance to public land policy and representation of Refuge Friends Groups, these individuals will add a wealth of knowledge that will help the Refuge Association tackle the tough challenges facing the Refuge System today."

Dragana Connaughton

Connaughton is a senior sales associate with Sotheby's International Realty, and is also an award-winning nature photographer whose work has been featured in National Wildlife magazine, as well as in exhibits in several galleries. Among her awards is the 2010 grand prize in the Palm Beach Post's 6th annual "Focus on Nature" contest. Connaughton specializes in premier estates and condominiums in Palm Beach and has represented buyers and sellers in the acquisition and disposition of some of the finest properties in the area. She possesses extensive knowledge of the community, its history, schools, and civic and charitable organizations, and she is skilled and experienced in complex real estate negotiations unique to high-end properties. Her full biography can be found [here](#).

Alan Palisoul

Palisoul is retired from the Solicitor's Office of the Department of the Interior after almost 30 years of service. As a Senior Attorney at Interior his focus was on providing legal services to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, primarily to the National Wildlife Refuge System and migratory bird programs. He worked on the creation of the Refuge System Improvement Act and played a major role in the development of the regulations that followed it. Following on that work, he helped develop and teach a course introducing the new compatibility regulations and policy to each of the Service's regions. He has assisted numerous refuge managers in their implementation. His full biography can be found [here](#).



National
Wildlife Refuge
Association

Cheryl Hart

Hart was President of the board of the Friends of Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon from 2011 until 2016. During her tenure, the Friends group celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2013 and was honored by the National Wildlife Refuge Association as the 2014 Refuge Friends Group of the Year. Her professional background is in Strategic Planning; Organizational Development; Grant Writing; Program planning, implementation and evaluation; and education, and she has served as staff or Board for several different nonprofits. Cheryl loves to travel and has visited or lived in 80 countries. Her full biography can be found [here](#).

Two members are returning to the board: William Buchanan, Jr. and Tom Goettel. Buchanan stepped off for a year, and is re-joining, while Goettel was voted in for a second term. Their bios can be found [here](#).

Three board members, Edith Eddy, Simon Perkins and Tom Prall, left the board as their terms expired.

###

The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge Association is to conserve America's wildlife heritage for future generations through strategic programs that protect, enhance, and expand the National Wildlife Refuge System and the landscapes beyond its boundaries.